Childhood Lead Poisoning Fact Sheet

Healthy People 2010 Goal:
To reduce the incidence of elevated blood lead levels (10 or more ug/dL) to zero for children under 5 years of age.

Consequences:

- Children with elevated lead levels may suffer from learning disabilities, mental retardation, behavioral problems, lowered IQ, stunted growth and hearing impairment. Convulsions, coma and death can occur at higher lead levels.

Causes:

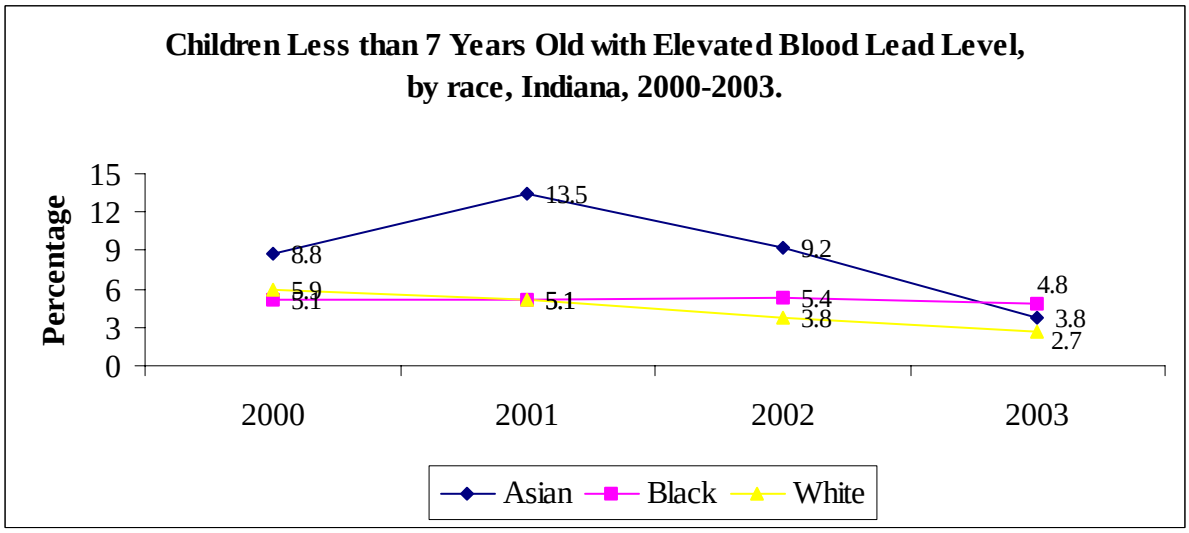
- Although childhood lead poisoning occurred in all population groups, the risk was higher for persons having low income and/or living in older housing.

Prevalence in Indiana:

- In 2003, the Indiana's Childhood Lead Poisoning Program screened 31,413 children and identified 924 (2.9%) children with elevated blood levels.
- By gender, 3.5% of the males and only 2.5% of the females under 7 years of old screened for lead poisoning in Indiana found to have elevated lead levels in their blood.

Trends in Childhood lead poisoning

- Between 1999 and 2003, the counties that consistently had more number of children with elevated blood lead levels were Allen, Clinton, Elkhart, Lake, Marion, St Joseph and Wayne. All these counties, except Elkhart, had a high percentage of children under poverty than Indiana State Average of 14.4%.
- Asians children less than 7 years old experienced high lead levels in their blood when compared to other races of same group. But the trend seems to be decreasing. Between 2000 and 2003 the percentage of Asian children, with elevated blood levels decreased from 8.8 to 3.8 (See Table).
- Although progress has been made in reducing Blood Lead Levels (BLLs) in Indiana children, the disparity between black children and children of other races continues to be a problem.
- Lead poisoning remains a preventable environmental health problem and Indiana is not likely to reach the Healthy People 2010 goal.



Source: The Lead Poisoning Prevention, Indiana State Department of Health.